

DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife

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HUNTING FROM POWERBOATS WON'T HARM WATERFOWL, FEDERAL WILDLIFE CHIEF DECLARES

Proposed Federal regulations permitting waterfowl hunting from powerboats without first detaching motors "will aid sportsmen and should not harm waterfowl," Director John S. Gottschalk of the Interior Department's Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife declared today.

"Most State wildlife agencies responding to a poll by the Bureau earlier this year indicated they favored the change. The present regulations are impractical and often dangerous," Dr. Gottschalk said. The wildlife chief pointed out, however, that powerboats still must be shut down before shooting begins.

The proposed regulations are similar to ones issued a year ago for the Great Lakes and certain Northeastern coastal waters. This was the first liberalization since the requirement to detach motors was ordered in 1944.

The restrictions, designed to prevent high-speed chasing of waterfowl and shooting "on the run," proved an undue burden. Removing and replacing motors is difficult in rough waters.

The proposed regulations will have wide application because many waterfowl hunters use outboards equipped with heavy motors, and sportsmen owning inboard motors no longer will be excluded.

Under the present regulations, motors have to be detached unless the boat is beached, resting at anchor, fastened within, or tied immediately alongside of any type of fixed hunting blind.

The proposed regulations appeared in the Federal Register on June 18. Interested parties have a month in which to comment before the revisions become law. Comments may be addressed to: Director, Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, Washington, D.C. 20240.

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